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# Faculty Senate Minutes February 19, 2015

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# February 19, 2015 Minutes of URI Faculty Senate

1. The regular meeting of the Faculty Senate was called to order at 3:07 p.m. in the Cherry Auditorium, Chester Kirk Building, Chairperson Nassersharif presiding.

All members were present except Senators Anderson, Boudreaux–Bartels, Dunn, Dunsworth, Irvine, Licht, Martin, Maynard, Meagher, Menden–Deuer, and Rynearson; ex officio members President Dooley, Vice President Valentino; CIO Bozylinsky; Deans Bonn, Jervis, Larrat, McCarthy, Richmond, Sullivan, and Wright. Associate Dean Veeger represented Dean Kirby, and Associate Dean Smith represented by Dean Corliss.

2. Chairperson Nassersharif announced that the Minutes of Faculty Senate Meeting #5, January 22, 2015 had been posted on the Faculty Senate website. He asked if there were any additions, corrections to or questions about these minutes. There were none. Chairperson Nassersharif ruled that in the absence of any changes or corrections, the minutes were approved.

## 3. REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### A. Announcements

1) Chairperson Nassersharif noted that he had recently attended the 2015 Intellectual Property Recognition Ceremony, an event honoring 70 faculty, staff, and students for their innovative research and scholarly activity. He commented on the impressive talent of URI's young faculty and thanked Vice President Sonnenfeld for sponsoring the event.

2) Chairperson Nassersharif announced that, because of weather–related class cancellations over 5 days since the start of the semester, the Academic Standards and Calendar committee had been asked to propose a make–up schedule. He said that the URI academic calendar has one day built into it as a make–up day (April 30, 2015, the first reading day at the end of the semester). He said that the Academic Standards and Calendar committee would present its recommendations under Reports of Standing and Special Committees.

3) Chairperson Nassersharif said that, at the January 22 Faculty Senate meeting, the Senate had approved the establishment of an ad hoc committee to study faculty voting rights and Faculty Senate membership and make recommendations. He said that the Committee would present a report that addresses faculty voting rights on matters requiring Faculty Senate approval.

4) Chairperson Nassersharif announced that, at today's meeting, the Executive Committee would recommend approval of a referendum to the General Faculty to change the Constitution of the Faculty Senate to be consistent with the proposed changes to the By–Laws. The By–Laws changes describe a new two–year position, Vice Chair/Chair–elect, to the Senate. He said that if changes to the Constitution are passed, the vote to approve changes to the By–Laws will be called at the March 12 Faculty Senate meeting.

5) Chairperson Nassersharif announced that, at today's meeting, elections would take place for Senate Chair and Vice Chair for the 2015–16 academic year.

6) Chairperson Nassersharif thanked Vice President Sonnenfeld for graciously agreeing to sponsor the reception at the University Club after the meeting this afternoon. He encouraged all Senators and others to attend.

7) Chairperson Nassersharif reminded non-Senators to sign the Permission to Speak form and asked everyone to remember to wait to be recognized and to identify themselves before speaking.

B. Vice Chairperson Rollo Koster announced that the Minutes of the 2014–15 Executive Committee Meetings #27 and #29 were available on the Faculty Senate website. She asked if there were any questions. There were none.

#### C. Recommendations of the Executive Committee

1) Vice Chairperson Rollo Koster recommended approval of the faculty appointments to the Committee on Information Technologies, Infrastructure, Computing, Communications, and Networking (CITICCN). The motion was seconded and approved.

2) Vice Chairperson Rollo Koster introduced Professor Wenisch to present the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee to address Faculty Senate membership and faculty voting rights. Professor Wenisch summarized the 3 charges to the Ad Hoc Committee and said that today's recommendation addressed one of the charges, voting rights on matters requiring Senate approval. He said that the Committee recommends that full-time non-tenure track faculty who have been employed for at least two years as a member of the full-time non-tenure track faculty be permitted full voting privileges in their departments and/or colleges and that any question regarding full-time status of an individual be resolved by the administrative supervisor of that individual. He moved approval of changes to University Manual sections 4.50.13 and 4.60.12, reflecting these recommendations. The motion was seconded. Discussion ensued. Senators expressed concern that expanding voting rights as recommended would negatively impact tenure track faculty by diminishing the decision-making of faculty with a longer-term investment in the institution. Senators and students also expressed views in favor of the expansion of voting rights. A motion was made to amend the recommendation by reducing the time employed as a full-time non-tenure track faculty member from two years to one year. The motion was seconded and approved by a show of hands, 25 yeas, 12 nays, and 0 abstentions. The Chairperson returned to the main motion as amended; it was seconded and discussion ensued. The main motion as amended was approved (by voice vote).

3) Vice Chairperson Rollo Koster summarized the proposed changes to the By-Laws of the Faculty Senate and the need to make corresponding changes to the Constitution of the Faculty Senate. Chairperson Nassersharif moved approval of conducting a referendum of the General Faculty on proposed changes to the Constitution of the Faculty Senate via electronic ballot. The motion was approved.

Vice Chairperson Rollo Koster recommended amendments (for consistency) to the previously moved and postponed changes to By-Laws, expanding the term length of the leadership positions of the Senate. Chairperson Nassersharif moved approval of changes to Sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.6, 5.7 of the By-Laws of the Faculty Senate. The motion was seconded. He said that the vote will be called at the March 12, 2015 Faculty Senate meeting.

D. Senator Cerbo presented the Report of the Nominating Committee. He placed in nomination for Chairperson of the Faculty Senate for the 2015–16 academic year Senator Rollo Koster, Professor of Medieval History, College of Arts and Sciences and, for Vice Chairperson of the Faculty Senate for the 2015–16 academic year Senator Welters, Professor of Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design, College of Human Science and Services. He asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none. Given that there were no additional nominations from the floor, he moved that the nominations be closed and that the Secretary cast one vote for the nominated slate. The motion passed. Senators Rollo Koster and Welters, the Chair–elect and Vice Chair–elect, were congratulated.

#### 4. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

The Provost said that the President was out of town and that he would make some brief remarks. He congratulated Senators Rollo Koster and Welters. He said that the legislation forwarded to the President after the January 22, 2015 Senate meeting had been approved.

The Provost reported that Governor Raimondo had nominated a new Chair of the Board of Education, Ms. Barbara Cottam, and other new members of the Board. Their appointments will be subject to a confirmation process.

The Provost reported on the 7th Annual Academic Summit, held in mid-January. Organized by the Joint Committee on Academic Planning (JCAP), 225 registrants (mostly faculty) participated in the discussions about current issues and opportunities in higher education. Ideas from the Summit will help form the next Academic Plan (2016–2021). Notes from the Summit can be found on the [Provost's website](#). JCAP will organize a student Academic Summit to be held later in the semester.

The Provost said that, when Commissioner Purcell had visited with him and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee in December, he had mentioned that performance–based funding was gaining traction in the RI General Assembly. The impact, the Provost said, of performance–based funding may vary among the 3 Rhode Island public institutions. URI has made very good progress in this area, but the details of the performance model may matter. Legislation is expected in the spring. The administration will remain attentive to the issue and the discussions around it.

#### 5. REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Chairperson Nassersharif called on Professor Hensley–Owens to present the Academic Standards and Calendar Committee Report #2014–15–3. She reported that the Committee had been asked to modify the Spring 2015 Academic Calendar to compensate for the class cancellations since late January. She said that as of February 16, classes had been cancelled on three Monday evenings, two Monday days, one Tuesday, and one Wednesday due to adverse weather events. The availability of SAKAI and other online environments was acknowledged as a means of maintaining class schedules and course work. Modifying the calendar to create more class days was intended for those courses that are heavily dependent on seat time (e.g., labs). The Committee recommended the following proposal, which did not impact the final exam schedule:

- Make Friday, 6 March a makeup for Monday evening classes starting at or after 4pm.
- Extend the last day of classes from Wednesday, 29 April to Saturday, 2 May.

- Make Thursday, 30 April a Monday meeting schedule. (Note: 30 April is already approved in the calendar as a make-up day and this change has already been approved and announced. We include it here for clarity, not for approval.)
- Make Friday, 1 May a Tuesday meeting schedule.
- Make Saturday, 2 May a Wednesday meeting schedule.
- Use Sunday, 3 May as Reading Day
- Maintain the exam period as originally scheduled.

Chairperson Nassersharif moved approval; the motion was seconded and discussion ensued. It was noted that use of the proposed modifications to the Academic Calendar would not be mandatory and that faculty may reschedule classes outside of the legislated days if it were more convenient. Senators expressed the view that make-up days late in the semester do not accomplish the same as those earlier in the semester. Students expressed concern for the rescheduling of classes on Friday and Saturday because of conflicts with other obligations scheduled for those days. Students also expressed concern for loss of weekday Reading Days, which, it was noted, is required by the University Manual (8.51.25). Students advocated for maintaining two Reading Days for preparation for final exams. The Provost said that, because Monday evening classes meet only once a week, missing 3 evening classes is the equivalent of 3 weeks of work. A motion was made to amend the proposal by eliminating the Wednesday schedule on Saturday, May 2. The motion was approved. A motion was made to amend the proposal by scheduling an additional Monday evening on March 27. For consistency with this motion, the following changes were proposed:

Extend the last day of classes from Wednesday, 29 April to Saturday, 2 May Thursday, 30 April

Use Friday, 1 May Sunday, 3 May as Reading Day

The motion to amend was approved. The vote on the main motion, as amended, was called. The motion was approved. The amended recommendation from the Academic Standards and Calendar Committee is the following:

- Make Friday, 6 March and Friday, 27 March as make-up days for Monday evening classes starting at or after 4pm.
- Extend the last day of classes from Wednesday, 29 April to Thursday, 30 April
- Make Thursday, 30 April a Monday meeting schedule. (Note: 30 April is already approved in the calendar as a make-up day and this change has already been approved and announced. We include it here for clarity, not for approval.)
- Use Friday, 1 May as Reading Day
- Maintain the exam period as originally scheduled.

Chairperson Nassersharif recommended that, in order to be able to act more expeditiously if additional classes were to be cancelled during the Spring 2015 semester, the Senate approve allowing the Executive Committee to act on behalf of the Senate. Following from University Manual section 8.70.13, he moved approval of allowing the FSEC to act on behalf of the Senate for the remainder of the Spring 2015 semester regarding the rescheduling of class days missed as the result of natural calamity (weather-related cancellations), work stoppage, or other. The motion was seconded and discussion ensued. There was support for the need to act expeditiously

and not be hindered by the requirement of having to bring a calendar change to a monthly Faculty Senate meeting; however, there was concern that students and faculty be allowed some means of providing input. The motion was amended to state: Any action of the Executive Committee in this regard shall be subject to a public hearing with a 48-hour notice. The main motion, as amended, was approved.

B. Associate Dean Killingbeck presented the Curricular Report No. 2014-15-5 from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate. He presented course changes (informational only) and moved approval of several new courses. The motion to approve the new courses was approved. He moved approval of a program proposal to increase by 1 credit (to 72 credits) the Post BS Doctor of Nursing Practice degree to correct the catalog description of the degree. One of the required core courses, NUR 660, had been increased from 3 credits to 4 credits, thus increasing the number of credits in the program. The motion was approved (1 abstention).

C. Dean Zawia presented the Curricular Report No. 2014-15-6 from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate. He presented a proposal from the School of Education to create an online Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and/or Dual Language Immersion. He described the program as a 31-credit Masters with certification with two tracks. One track is for certified teachers planning to add an English as a Second Language (ESL) or Dual Language Immersion certification extension to their teaching licenses; the second track is for graduate students seeking to develop expertise in working with adult second language learners in a range of settings. He moved approval. Discussion ensued. Concerns were expressed about instructor training for online delivery, sufficient curriculum to achieve the literacy outcomes, and the need for additional resources for faculty hires. Professor Hammadou and Senator Byrd answered questions on behalf of the proposal. The vote was called and the motion was approved.

D. Senator English presented the Five Hundred and Twenty-First Report of the Curricular Affairs Committee. She said that Section I was informational and asked if there were any questions. There were none. Senator English said that Section II required confirmation by the Faculty Senate and moved approval of 3 new courses, and 3 course change proposals. The motion passed. She presented the following curriculum proposals: a new Minor in Arabic, a change in the name of the current degree within Plant Sciences and Entomology from "Environmental Horticulture and Turfgrass Management" to "Plant Sciences", and the creation of 3 subplans in Plant Sciences: Turfgrass Management, Ornamental Horticulture and Sustainable Crop Production. A motion to approve the curriculum changes was seconded and approved.

## 7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chairperson Nassersharif asked if there were any Unfinished Business. There was none.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

Chairperson Nassersharif asked if there were any New Business. Senator (Lauren) Mandel asked for clarification about the status of online courses when all courses on all campuses are cancelled. She was informed that because online courses require no travel to campus, they run as scheduled regardless of notice of class cancellation. The Provost indicated that future notices would make this clear.

9. A motion was made to adjourn. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Neff